

# Cataracts



Normal vision



Cataract simulation

## What is a cataract?

A cataract is a clouding of the clear lens in the eye and is one of the leading causes of vision impairment. While cataracts most commonly occur in those who are older, they can develop in younger people as well. Some people are born with a cataract.

## What are the common symptoms?

Early symptoms include glare and sensitivity to bright light. However, as the cataract worsens some of the common signs include:

- Blurred, hazy and foggy vision
- Haloes around lights
- Distortion or double vision in the affected eye
- A feeling of looking through a film, veil or curtain
- Changes in the appearance of colours

## Who is at risk?

Cataracts are part of the normal ageing process.

However there is an increased risk of early onset for those people who have:

- A family history of cataracts
- Diabetes
- Sustained an eye injury
- Steroid treatment
- Excessive exposure to ultraviolet light
- Smoked for a period of time

## Can cataracts be treated?

Yes, cataract surgery is one of the most common and successful surgical procedures performed in Australia.

The cloudy lens (cataract) is removed and replaced with an artificial lens implant called an intraocular lens (IOL). Many different types of IOL are available to suit different people. You can discuss cataract surgery with your ophthalmologist.

When surgery is not an option, the use of low vision aids, advice and information can assist.

## How can Vision Australia help?

Vision Australia provides support and services to people of all ages and stages of life who are blind or have vision loss.

We work with people to achieve what's important to them such as studying, finding or retaining employment, leading an active social life or continuing to do the things they love.

With the support of our professional teams, people who are blind or have low vision can develop their skills and make use of technology and equipment that will enable them to live independently.

## Contact Vision Australia

**Call** 1300 84 74 66  
**Email** [info@visionaustralia.org](mailto:info@visionaustralia.org)  
**Website** [visionaustralia.org](http://visionaustralia.org)  
**Locations** VIC | ACT | NSW | QLD | WA